

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

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## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Eastern District of Michigan

United States of America

v.

Brandon Griesemer

Case: 2:18-mj-30040  
Assigned To : Unassigned  
Assign. Date : 1/19/2018  
Description: IN RE SEALED  
MATTER(BG)

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of January 9-10, 2018 in the county of Oakland in the  
Eastern District of Michigan, the defendant(s) violated:*Code Section*

18 U.S.C. 875(c)

*Offense Description*


Interstate Communications with Intent to Extort - threat to injure

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.  
*Complainant's signature*Special Agent Sean Callaghan, FBI*Printed name and title*

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: January 19, 2018  
*Judge's signature*City and state: Detroit, MIAnthony P. Patti, Magistrate Judge*Printed name and title*

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, Sean Callaghan, being duly sworn, state the following:

**I. INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND**

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and have investigated a variety of violations, including violent crimes, as an FBI agent for over 14 years.

2. The information contained in this affidavit is based on my personal knowledge and observations during the course of this investigation, law enforcement reports that I have reviewed, communications with others who have personal knowledge of the events and circumstances described in this affidavit, and information gained through my training and experience.

3. This affidavit is in support of a complaint and arrest warrant for Brandon Griesemer. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause, I have not included each and every fact known to me concerning this investigation. Rather, I have set forth only the facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause to believe that Brandon Griesemer knowingly and willfully transmitted in interstate and foreign commerce a cellular phone

communication to Cable News Network (CNN), and that communication contained a threat to injure employees of CNN, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 875(c).

## **II. INVESTIGATION AND PROBABLE CAUSE**

4. On September 19, 2017, at approximately 9:49 AM, an employee of the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor received a phone call from a male caller, calling from cellular phone number (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66. The caller made derogatory comments relating to the mosque and Muslims. The caller then hung up.

5. Using an online database, officers from the Ann Arbor Police Department identified Adult Witness 1 (“AW-1”) as the person to whom (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66 is registered. AW-1 is Brandon Griesemer’s father.

6. On September 21, 2017, Ann Arbor police made contact with Griesemer’s mother at the residence where she and Griesemer live. Griesemer was not present at the time. Griesemer’s mother told officers that Griesemer had told her that he had previously called a mosque. Officers informed Griesemer’s mother that they would like to talk to Griesemer, and that he should call them.

7. On the same day, Ann Arbor police officers received a telephone call from Griesemer. Griesemer stated that he had called the mosque on September 19, and that he was angry at the time of the call.

8. On January 9, 2018, at approximately 3:06 PM, Cable News Network (CNN) received a call to (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*-00—a landline located in Atlanta, Georgia that is a publicly listed contact number for CNN—from (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*-66, the same number used to call the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor on September 19, 2017. The call was made at 3:06 PM. When the operator responded to the call, a male voice stated, “Fake news. I’m coming to gun you all down. Fuck you, fuckin’ ni\*\*\*\*rs.” The caller then hung up.

9. Approximately three minutes later, the same CNN number received another call, again from (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*-66. When the operator responded to the call, the same male voice from the prior call began making disparaging comments regarding CNN and instructing the operator that CNN employees should kill themselves. The caller then said “I am on my way right now to gun the fuckin’ CNN cast down. Fuck you.” The operator then asked the man for his name. The caller responded, “Fuck you. I am coming to kill you.” The caller then hung up.

10. Approximately thirty minutes later, the same CNN number received another call, again from (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66. When the operator responded to the call, the same male voice from the prior call began whispering further derogatory comments toward CNN. He stated, "I'm coming for you CNN. I'm smarter than you. More powerful than you. I have more guns than you. More manpower. Your cast is about to get gunned down in a matter of hours." The caller then hung up.

11. On January 9, Investigator G. Smith, employed by CNN, conducted a search of law enforcement databases for the numer (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66. He learned that the number is registered to AW-1, Brandon Griesemer's father. Investigator Smith also learned that a second number was associated with that wireless account: (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*46. Investigator Smith called (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*46 and asked to speak with AW-1. A man answered the call, stated that AW-1 was not home, and identified himself as "Brandon."

12. Investigator Smith recorded his conversation with Griesemer at cell number (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*46 on January 9. He then compared the audio of that recording with the recorded audio of the threatening calls made to CNN, and confirmed that the voices sounded like the same individual.

13. On January 10, 2018, at approximately 6:37 PM, the same CNN number received another call, again from (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66. When the operator responded to the call, the same male voice from the prior call began making disparaging remarks regarding Jewish individuals. He stated, “You are going down. I have a gun and I am coming to Georgia right now to go to the CNN headquarters to fucking gun every single last one of you. I have a team of people. It’s going to be great, man . . . . You gotta get prepared for this one, buddy.” The caller then hung up.

14. On January 9 and January 10, 2018, Griesemer made approximately 22 total calls to CNN, the above four of which contained threats.

15. Investigator Smith collected location data for (\*\*\*) \*\*\*-\*\*66—the cellular phone number used to make threats against CNN. On January 9, 2018, that number accessed a cellular tower near 42075 West 11 Mile Road, Novi, Michigan.

### III. CONCLUSION

16. Based on the above investigation, probable cause exists that Brandon Griesemer knowingly and willfully transmitted in interstate and foreign commerce a cellular phone communication to CNN, and that communication contained a threat to injure employees of CNN, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 875(c).

Respectfully Submitted,



Sean Callaghan  
Special Agent, FBI

Subscribed and sworn before me on January 19, 2018



Hon. Anthony P. Patti  
United States Magistrate Judge